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Richard Izmirian  
2215 Eaton Avenue  
San Carlos, CA 94070

650-592-9595  
izmirian@earthlink.net

Comments for 9/7/99 CALFED hearing, San Jose.

Good evening. My name is Richard Izmirian. I am a member of the Bay/Delta Advisory Council representing the California Sportfishing Protection Alliance. I am a director of the Federation of Fly Fishers, and I am the longest serving member of the Striped Bass Stamp Advisory Committee.

Tonight I would like to speak on our hopes for fisheries restoration. The Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan lays out some processes that provide the potential for robust fishery recoveries - we have adaptive management and conceptual models, strategic plans and information management systems. All good things. Just add water.

What do we expect from an open, science based process?

- We expect the scapegoating of striped bass to come to an end. Striped bass provide a valuable recreational and , to some extent, subsistence fishery. We expect to see a responsible ecosystem based multi-species oriented striped bass recovery plan - not a hatchery palliative.
- We expect steelhead populations to well exceed the modest 40,000 fish goal set by CALFED. This can be achieved by eliminating or bypassing dams that are choking the arteries of our landscape. We applaud the modest beginnings on Butte Creek. Now let's get rid of Englebright Dam and create fishways around Shasta and Oroville Dams. Steelhead recovery needs the same kind of boldness of vision that put Trinity River water on the deserts of Kern County and into the toilets of San Diego.
- We expect salmon to be given a fighting chance - cold water, effective fish screens, and currents that flow in the right direction.

Do we really expect all this? Not if the Aquapus gets its way. We expected our public trust agencies to implement the Central Valley Project Improvement Act, but the Aquapus squeezed.

We expected the State Water Resources Control Board to rule on Yuba River flows following the hearings seven years ago. Instead, the Aquapus squeezed and staff was "re-assigned".

We expected Endangered Species Act protection of the Delta smelt, but this spring the Aquapus invoked its inky demons and the Delta smelt went south. Even here in enlightened Silicon Valley, a tentacle reached in to terrify the local populace with threats of imminent shutdown of the high tech industry if the Aquapus did not get its way.

The list goes on and on, but I only have three minutes.

CALFED is now pinning its hopes on something called the Environmental Water Account. Are we hopeful too? Yes. Are we a bit uneasy? You bet.

History will judge CALFED on how well it achieved its ecosystem restoration goals. Give us assurances that these goals will not be subordinated by water supply evangelists. Give us assurances that dedicated and hard working agency staff will not be put on ice because recommendations interfere with water development schemes. Give us assurances that decisions affecting California's environmental and water future will be made openly, transparently, and with respect to the public trust.

Thank you.